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# THE AFRICAN GAME FISHES

Some of Them Are Reported Far Too Ponderous to Even Be Landed.

This is not a tale of slaughter. My experiences with West African sea fish are limited to Lagos, in Southern Nigeria, and are little more than a record of failure, but I write in the hope that better men may succeed where I failed, and that in places where the obstacles to sport are not as many as in Lagos, others may be induced to take up one of the finest forms of sport, the pursuit of the great game fish of the tropics.

Lagos Harbor is a wide, muddy estuary with several tidal creeks flowing into it. At the entrance is the usual sandbar, with a heavy surf beating on it, making it impossible for large vessels to enter. A service of "branch boats," small steamers of some 8-foot draft, has for many years been kept up to carry cargo from the ocean-going ships across the bar, but no small number of these have been wrecked on the ever-changing sands and now a scheme is on foot to push out two huge moles of stone beyond the bar, forming a narrow outlet which the scour of the tide is expected to keep clear. When I first knew Lagos, the east mole had just been begun, but now it runs nearly a mile out to sea.

From off this mole I have hooked many large fish, but never succeeded in landing the biggest, on account of their immense strength, and the heavy swell that rolls in. It is extremely difficult to get a boat to fish from. The native canoes are ill adapted for the purpose, being too cranky to follow a fish in heavy water, and the native fishermen resent Europeans fishing, looking on it as an interference with their trade, and as they are well-to-do and independent, it is not easy even to obtain from them, at double or treble the market price, the live-bait necessary to catch the big fish.

The best bait are gray mullet, averaging about half a pound, which come in on the tide in large shoals, and are pursued by numbers of barracouta (Sphyræna), voracious fishes not unlike a pike, but with far more formidable teeth. The largest I have killed was just under 5 feet long, but they grow to at least 8 feet. Besides these there is the Polynemus, almost identical with the Indian bahmeen, or Bombay salmon, which grows to 4 feet long and a weight of 50 pounds, the great horse mackerels (Caranx and Argyrius), the former attaining a weight of 100 pounds, and the tarpon. The last I believe, has not yet been accepted by naturalists as a West African fish, no specimen having been brought to Europe from the coast, but I have seen and handled them caught by natives in nets, up to 4-1-2 feet long, and have seen some in the water of far greater size than a stuffed tarpon of 180 pounds, which I examined in London. I had long known of their existence in Lagos, but could never find where they fed till 10 days before I left the country or the last time, when they began to appear along the mole, which had then reached out some 1200 yards beyond high-water mark, and every evening numbers of enormous fish used to come rolling on top of the water in chase of the mullets. Unfortunately, I had only a few days before broken my big rod, and there was not another in Lagos fit for such heavy work, so I could only watch the tarpon sadly and think of what might have been.

The tackle I used for these various big fish consisted of a single very large hook, a twisted wire trace 2 feet long, with two large swivels, 250 yards of 24 thread "cuttyhunk," the best sea line ever made for the tropics, and a 5 1-2 inch sea reel, the working parts made of the hardest phosphor bronze. Steel rusts at once in these climates, and a few big fish will utterly demoralize the so-called "gunmetal," but phosphor bronze will stand almost as much wear as steel, and will not rust. My rod was a powerful greenheart, but for this work a split cane of the best quality would be better. It should have an agate top ring and large snake or bridge rings.—The Field, London.

# LITTLE LET-UP AT T WHARF

Market Boats Bring Most of the Fares to Big Fish Mart Today.

It was a little quieter at T wharf this morning than it has been for the preceding days of the week, although there were 14 fares at the dock this morning to supply the day's trade, 12 of which are shore fares.

The steam trawlers Swell and Crest had the largest hauls, the former with 60,000 pounds and the latter 28,000 pounds. The shore boats brought in some fair sized trips of haddock and cod, which sold at average prices.

Haddock was quoted at \$2.50 to \$3.50 a hundred weight, large cod, \$3 to \$4.50, market cod, \$2 to \$2.50, hake, \$4 to \$6.25, pollock, \$2 to \$2.50 and cusk, \$1.25.

## Boston Arrivals.

The fares and prices in detail are:  
Str. Swell, 50,000 haddock, 10,000 cod, 500 lemon sole.  
Str. Crest, 28,000 haddock, 500 cod, 3000 lemon sole.  
Sch. Jeanette, 5500 haddock, 500 cod.  
Sch. Jorgina, 7500 haddock, 1000 cod.  
Sch. Mary F. Sears, 5000 haddock, 300 cod, 1500 hake.  
Sch. Olive F. Hutchings, 4000 haddock, 500 cod, 1000 pollock.  
Sch. Flavilla, 3000 haddock, 600 cod, 1000 pollock.  
Sch. M. Madeline, 300 haddock, 4600 cod.  
Sch. Matthew S. Greer, 2000 haddock, 1100 cod, 3000 hake.  
Sch. Sabine, 3600 cod.  
Sch. Stranger, 4000 haddock, 1400 cod, 500 hake, 2500 pollock.  
Sch. Harriett, 5500 haddock, 900 cod, 2000 pollock.  
Sch. Eva and Mildred, 7500 haddock, 800 cod, 1200 pollock.  
Sch. W. M. Goodspeed, 7500 haddock, 800 cod, 1000 hake.  
Haddock, \$2.50 to \$3.50 per cwt.; large cod, \$3 to \$4.50; market cod, \$2 to \$2.50; hake, \$4 to \$6.25; pollock, \$2 to \$2.50; cusk, \$1.25.

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## Fishing Fleet Movements.

Sch. Georgia arrived at Yarmouth Monday last.  
Schs. Virginia, Ethel B. Penny, Pontiac and Gladys and Nellie arrived at Liverpool Monday last and cleared for fishing.

## Vessel Sold.

Sch. Ellen C. Burke, 60.32 tons net registered, built at Essex in 1902 and owned by the Eastern Fisheries Company of Boston has been sold to C. W. Mann of Galveston, Texas.

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## Keeping Them Guessing.

The halibut situation is keeping the wholesalers in Fulton Fish Market, New York, a-guessing, says the Fishing Gazette. There were two cars during the last week and Chesbro Brothers have advices of a car scheduled to reach the firm on yesterday.

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# NEWS OF THE PROVINCES.

A large fish entirely unknown to the local fishermen was left by the falling tide at Green Harbor, Shelburne County recently. After a strenuous battle it was killed and brought ashore. The fish was about 20 feet long and as large around as a barrel. Its head which was somewhat the shape of an alligator's, measured almost three feet from the tip of its nose to its eyes. The presence of a "blow hole" would indicate that it was one of the smaller species of whale.

# ANOTHER BILL NOW AIMED AT TORCHERS

State House, Boston, January 30.—Robert Robinson of Beverly is the petitioner for legislation making it unlawful for any person to display torches or other lights designated or used for the purpose of taking herring or other fish in any of the waters of the commonwealth.

A provision is made, however, that

the commissioners on fisheries and game may grant permits for the display of torches or other light for the above named purposes, with such restrictions as in their judgment will prevent the same from constituting a nuisance.

The bill has been referred to the committee on fisheries and game for a hearing. Senator C. Augustus Norwood of Hamilton is chairman of the committee.

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# FISHERMEN WHO WON'T GO FISHING

French Sardine Industry Paralyzed by Obstinate Strike.

On the first of January, 116 of the sardine tinning establishments in Brittany shut down their works, for want of fish to tin, says a writer in the Boston Transcript. The 20 establishments which remain open will be shut down at an early date, already fixed. The great fishing industry of Brittany is dead, killed by the fishermen themselves, who, attempting to keep up the price of fish, unwisely kept down the supplies.

The Bretons have been sardine fishers from time immemorial. The importance of their fishing industry grew with the development of the tinning industry. In 1887 it was estimated that sardine fishing off the oceanic coasts of France gave rise, annually, to commercial transactions of the value of a hundred and fifty million francs, and occupied from a hundred and twenty thousand to a hundred and fifty thousand people. About this time competition sprang up, and, while the French remained the best, the immense output of cheaper, if inferior, sardines from other countries robbed the French trade of much of its importance.

## Scope of the Brittany Industry.

About 11 years ago the hauls made by the Breton fishermen began to fall off, and the want of fish, added to the foreign competition, caused a crisis which lasted to the end. In 1900, 37 million kilos and in 1901, 39 million kilos of sardines were tinned in that province fell to eight million kilos, and the quantity has continued to fall there ever since, while the output of the tanners in every other country rose. Spain and Portugal place every year from 1,200,000 to 1,800,000 cases on the market (each case contains a hundred tins); Norway, several hundred thousands of cases of sprats, called sardines; the United States great quantities of tins of small herrings, called domestic sardines; Japan has also a great tinning industry. Compared with the output of these countries the Breton industry seems insignificant. When in full work the factories of Brittany could turn out no more than 900,000 cases a year. The want of fish has of late reduced their

output to 150,000 cases. "It is not even a hospital we are closing, it is a cemetery," said one of the Breton tanners the day the factories shut down.

## Fishers Who Won't Materialize.

The gravity of the crisis is due to the fact that the Bretons, masters of a sterile soil, depend largely for their existence on these fisheries. All the industries of Brittany are affected by the sardine trade. Including the fishermen 50,000 people are thrown completely out of work by the closing of the factories; the number of those indirectly affected is far larger.

## Still Plenty of Fish.

It is a pretence to say the fish has deserted the Breton coast. At various periods sardines ceased to be found off that coast. Their disappearance was attributed to a hundred different reasons, from deviations of the Gulf Stream to the passage of steamships. The fact seems proved that the sardine is a semi-torpid fish which seeks warm or tepid waters; during the winter it lies on the bed of the ocean, rising towards the surface for food when the currents become less cold in late spring, summer, and part of autumn, disappearing into the deep sea even during these periods if cold currents come, or cold winds blow off the land. The Breton fishermen have from time immemorial, sought only to take the fish which rose to the surface. Their nets, the famous filets bleus, are rude and antiquated engines, dear to them, both from old association and because of their cheapness. Why, they ask, should they pay four hundred francs for a new-fangled machine when they can get a net such as their fathers used for 60 francs? They ignore the fact that their nets wear out rapidly, and that not one, but several nets with different meshes are necessary for them. The old method persisted in by the Breton fishermen, was, having sunk the nets, to cast bait on the sea over them, and when the sardines had risen to the bait to raise the nets. By this primitive method, in the phrase of the disgusted tinner, "they caught none but the fish that wanted to be caught"—in other words those that did not swim away while the nets were being drawn up. The small hauls obtained with the nets satisfied the majority of the fish-



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## SALT COD FROM CAPE BRETON

### Sch. Lucinda I. Lowell Brings Cargo for the Gorton-Pew Fisheries Company.

The only arrival here this morning is sch. Lucinda I. Lowell, seven days from Ingonish, C. B., with 125,000 lbs. of salt cod for Gorton-Pew Fisheries Company.

Yesterday's heavy blow outside hampered the operations of the gill netters, only a few of them securing lifts, which were generally small fares. Some of the steamers failed to pick up their nets at all and will hunt for them this morning.

#### Today's Arrivals and Receipts.

The arrivals and receipts in detail are:

Sch. Lucinda I. Lowell, Ingonish, C. B., 125,000 lbs. salt cod.

Str. Hugo, gill netting, 550 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Prince Olaf, gill netting, 350 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Ibsen, gill netting, 500 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Mystery, gill netting, 300 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Lorena, gill netting, 800 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Evelyn H., gill netting, 350 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Nora Robinson, gill netting, 2200 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Venture, gill netting, 1000 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Mary F. Ruth, gill netting, 3500 lbs. fresh fish.

Str. Nomad, gill netting, 2000 lbs. fresh fish.

#### Vessels Sailed.

Sch. Senator Saulsbury, Georges handlining.

Sch. Titania Georges handlining.

Sch. Lizzie M. Stanley haddocking.

Sch. Elva L. Spurling haddocking.

Sch. Ingomar haddocking.

Sch. Moanham haddocking.

Sch. Rita A. Viator, haddocking.

Sch. Annie and Jennie haddocking.

Sch. Clara G. Silva haddocking.

Sch. Mary P. Goulart haddocking.

Sch. Adeline haddocking.

Sch. Edith Silveria haddocking.

Sch. Josephine DeCosta, haddocking.

Sch. Leonora Silveira, haddocking.

#### TODAY'S FISH MARKET.

##### Salt Fish.

Handline Georges codfish, large, \$5.50 per cwt; medium, \$4.62 1-2; snappers, \$3.25.

Eastern deck handline codfish, large, \$5.25; medium, \$4.50.

Eastern halibut codfish, large, \$4.50; mediums, \$3.75; snappers, \$3.

Georges halibut codfish, large, \$4.50; mediums, \$4.

Cusk, large, \$2.25; mediums, \$1.75; snappers, \$1.25.

Pollock, \$1.50.

Hake, \$1.50.

Haddock, \$1.50.

Newfoundland salt herring, \$3.25 per bbl.

Newfoundland pickled herring, \$5 per bbl.

##### Fresh Fish.

Haddock, \$1.10 per cwt.

Eastern cod, large, \$2.10; medium, \$1.75; snappers, 75c.

Western cod, large, \$2.15; mediums, \$1.80; snappers, 75c.

All codfish not gilled 10c per 100 pounds less than the above.

Hake, \$1.15.

Cusk, large, \$1.30; mediums, \$1; snappers, 50c.

Dressed pollock, 80c.; round, 90c.

Bank halibut 15 1-2c per lb. for white; 12 1-2c for gray.

Newfoundland frozen herring, \$2.75 per cwt.

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#### Dory Picked Up.

While hauling his lobster pots about a mile north of Monhegan last Monday afternoon, John Field, a lobster fisherman came across a 15-foot dory floating bottom up.

The dory evidently belonged to some fishing vessel. It was painted lead color with dark red top streak and No 10 painted in white on the bow. The kid boards were in the dory, also a trawl-keg and line. On the end of the painter was a four-pound window weight.

Mr. Field towed the dory into Monhegan and would be glad to hear from the owner.

## TRIPS ARE FEW THIS MORNING

### Two Steam Trawlers and Three Sailing Crafts Are at T Wharf.

T wharf arrivals were few this morning, two steam trawlers and three of the sailing fleet comprising the list of fares.

Steamer Foam had 30,000 pounds and steamer Spray, 45,000 pounds, mostly haddock. A nice trip was that of sch. Elk from off shore which hauled for 60,000 pounds of haddock and 3000 pounds of cod. Other fares were sch. Robert and Arthur, 42,000 lbs. Galatea, 3300 lbs.

Haddock at wholesale sold at \$2.10 to \$3.50 a hundred pounds, large cod \$4 to \$4.50; market cod, \$2 to \$2.50; hake, \$3 to \$6 and pollock \$2.50.

#### Boston Arrivals.

The fares and prices in detail are:

Str. Foam 24,700 haddock, 1400 cod, 3000 pollock.

Str. Spray, 43,000 haddock, 2000 cod.

Sch. Elk, 60,000 haddock, 3000 cod.

Sch. Robert and Arthur, 40,000 haddock, 2000 cod.

Sch. Galatea, 7000 haddock, 700 cod, 600 pollock.

Haddock, \$2.10 to \$3.50 per cwt.

large cod, \$4 to \$4.50; market cod, \$2 to \$2.50; hake, \$3 to \$6; pollock, \$2.50.

#### As Portland Sees It.

Portland fishermen, as well as those of Gloucester, are anxiously awaiting the result of the investigation which is now being carried on by the government in regard to the "gill net" fishery, Alvin B. Alexander, whom the U. S. authorities consider one of the leading fish experts, having been on the coast for several weeks studying the situation. His report on otter or beam trawls on steam operated boats is before the authorities at Washington, and their decision as to the continued use of steam trawls is awaited with much anxiety. Outside of those directly interested in the use of gill nets the feeling among the local fishermen is almost unanimous against the new system. The manner of operating the nets is known probably by few outside of those engaged in the fishing business and is as follows. The gill net is put in position, presenting a firm hard wall when in the water, and is then hauled in quickly by steam power. The result is that the fish are entangled in the nets, the heads of many being caught in the mesh by the gills, hence the name "gill net." Fishermen generally complain that the method is injurious to the business and are hoping that some means may be adopted to abolish it.—Portland Argus.

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#### HOLD UP PAVING

### So New Fish Pier Building Can Be Rushed Along.

When the Port Directors gathered for their weekly meeting Thursday forenoon at their offices in the Marshall building, Boston, they thought that they had done with the subject of paving for a few days at least, but fate ruled otherwise.

A letter was received from the Boston Fish Market corporation asking that the directors delay paving Commonwealth Pier 6, as it would interfere with the construction of the buildings on the pier if the paving operations were continued.

By the agreement between the state and the fish dealers the pier is supposed to be paved by August 1 next, but because of the request of the less-ees this will not be done. The fish pier will be paved with shallow granite blocks and brick, as the paving is not covered, and the paving will be exposed to the weather.

The directors also received a letter from the committee on maritime affairs of the Chamber of Commerce asking that steps be taken toward the permanent marking of the Broad sound channel. The directors have had more buoys put along this channel, but all the buoys have been temporary, and the chamber committee thinks it is time for permanent marking by lighted and other kinds of buoys.

## CRAFTS IN HAD MOSTLY HADDOCK

### New Shore Goods Brought \$4 But Off Shores Went at \$2.50.

A small fleet of seven sail of crafts constituted the arrivals of fresh groundfish at T wharf, this morning with a total of 180,000 pounds, mostly haddock and cod.

From off shore are schs. Ethel B. Penny, 60,000 pounds; Frances S. Grueby, 60,000 pounds; Natalie J. Nelson, 36,000 pounds. The four shore boats have small trips from 3000 to 10,000 weight a piece.

Haddock sold at \$2.50 to \$4 a hundred weight, large cod, \$4 to \$5, market cod, \$2 to \$2.50, hake, \$3 to \$6.25 and pollock, \$2.50 to \$3.

#### Boston Arrivals

The fares and prices in detail are:

Sch. Ethel B. Penny, 35,000 haddock, 20,000 cod, 1500 hake, 1000 cusk, 2000 pollock.

Sch. Frances S. Grueby, 55,000 haddock, 2000 cod.

Sch. Edith Silveria 6500 haddock, 500 cod.

Sch. Harriett, 5500 haddock, 500 cod.

Sch. Eva and Mildred, 2000 haddock, 900 cod.

Sch. Natalie T. Nelson, 34,000 haddock, 1600 cod, 1000 hake.

Sch. W. M. Goodspeed, 8000 haddock, 700 cod, 1500 hake.

Haddock, \$2.50 to \$4 per cwt.; large cod, \$4 to \$5; market cod, \$2 to \$2.50; hake, \$3 to \$6.25; pollock \$2.50 to \$5.

## INJURED MAN ARRIVES HOME

### John Cross Tells of the Big Sea Which Swept Sch. Cavalier.

John Cross, one of the crew of sch. Cavalier, who was badly injured on shipboard on January 4 off Canso when the craft was swept by a heavy sea, which carried two of his comrades to death, returned to Boston on the Halifax steamer yesterday, after being 22 days in the hospital at Louisburg, C. B.

Grave fears were at first entertained for Cross' recovery on account of the injuries that he received. On January 4, the craft was hit by a tremendous sea, carrying four men overboard, and two of them, James Cavanaugh and John Kenton of this city were drowned. The other two, by grasping ropes and dangling halcyards managed to pull themselves on deck again.

Cross was hove down and jambed and badly bruised. He was unconscious when his comrades picked him up and took him below. Capt. Porper headed her for shore as soon as the storm abated, Cross was removed to the hospital, where he was under treatment for 22 days.

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#### Going Halibuting.

Sch. Rena A. Percy is fitting for fresh halibuting under command of Capt. John G. Stream.

Sch. Maud F. Silva purchased by Capt. Charles Colson, formerly of sch. Elk, is also being fitted for the halibut fishery. Capt. Colson will go in her.

#### Newfoundland Fish Stocks Short.

We learn that the stock of fish in St. John's today is less than 250,000 qts., which is the smallest amount at this date for years. There is not much in the outports, but then as the price was so high last fall the fishermen sold all they had.—St. John's, N. F., Herald.

#### Fishing Fleet Movements.

Sch. Gertrude DeCosta arrived at Liverpool Wednesday last and cleared.

ermen, who, rejoicing in the high prices of the fish, could not be convinced that their policy in keeping the tinning factories under-supplied was suicidal, or got to believe it would be more profitable for them to take large quantities of fish and sell them at a low price.

#### A Triumph of Prejudice.

The assurances of the manufacturers that busy times at the factories would mean employment for all the women of the fishermen's families did not move the men; and when at last the fishermen of Saint Guenole and Pen-march made trial with the new engines, drag-nets, and turning-nets, and made great hauls with them, their rivals of the other ports joined against them in a hostile band. Finding that threats and violence did not avail the stubborn majority sought the help of the government. This the government, desirous of the votes of the greater number, readily gave. The new nets were declared illegal, and orders were given to suppress their use. Petitions from the tanners, and from the fishermen who had adopted the new engines, were gravely referred to a commission of hostile fishermen to be reported on, and on the commission reporting unfavorably as to their use, the government declined to modify the regulations against them. To enforce the prohibitory regulations fishermen partisans of the old method of fishing were sworn in as special police, and directed to trace their rivals and obtain evidence of their illegal fishing, and the strange sight was seen in the Breton waters of fleets of fishing boats filled with fishermen casting nets, followed by others filled by other fishermen who cast no nets, and desired no fish, but occupied themselves verbaux, against their fellows. Now that the industry is killed all will suffer. Those who will suffer are not the men who did the harm by refusing to take the fish, but those who taking it with the modern engines were prepared to supply the factories and keep the industry alive. On the 14th of this month a hundred and fifty fishermen will be tried at Quimper for the crime of using nets, by which it was demonstrated large quantities of sardines can still be caught in Breton waters.

#### There Were Anglers in Those Days.

The art of angling goes far back into remote ages. Some authorities say it is as ancient as Deucalion's flood; others that Belus, who was the first inventor of innocent recreations, was the first inventor of angling; others that Seth, one of the sons of Adam, taught it to his sons, and that by them it was transmitted to posterity. Some of these ideas may have emanated from men who have had a "fad" for making angling more ancient than is needful. Angling, however, is more ancient than the Christian era, for mention of fish-hooks is made in the book of the Prophet Amos, and inasmuch as it is generally accepted that that book was written by Moses, it may be reasonably supposed that there were anglers in those days.—English Fishing Gazette.

#### Herring Scarce in Southern Bays.

The following message has been received from Tidewater J. B. Gorman, of Harbor Breton, by the Marine and Fisheries Department at St. John's, N. F.: "Herring at Harbor Breton and in Bay; two barrels per dory. Nothing doing at Conaigre Bay at present. Some seines abandoned the fishery yesterday owing to the scarcity of herring. At Miller's Passage, one to three barrels, but weather stormy and interfering with fishery."

#### Crew Were Saved.

The fishing schooner Florence May, which went ashore at Digby, N. S., last Saturday, probably will be a total loss. Life savers took off the crew and the men were brought to Digby. The vessel was built in Eastport, Me., in 1901, and hailed from St. Andrews, N. B.

#### Knife In Catfish.

In a large catfish recently caught at Green Cove Spring, Fla., was found a penknife when dressed.

#### Fishing Fleet Movements.

Sch. Thomas S. Gorton arrived at Liverpool Tuesday last and cleared.